



LAWO
CLASSICS

Håkon Daniel Nystedt
Purgatorium

Ørjan Matre
Four pieces from a distance

Oslo Kammerkor
Håkon Daniel Nystedt — Conductor

Purgatorium

As the title would suggest, *Purgatorium* is a work about purification - a journey through strange inner landscapes, never knowing which road you'll end up on. The parts culminate into each other in the least expected ways, transformations materialise, and we are thrown into mysterious and unfamiliar sounds and circumstances.

While working on this I sensed the need for an *a cappella* motet in the middle of the piece. This meant I needed a lyric, and so I wrote a letter to the Swedish poet, librettist, and writer Peter Bäckström. After a bit of letter correspondence between Nesodden, where I lived, and Malmö, where he lived, a sonnet turned up in the mail, and it was as if the music was already finished. We'd written it together, without any sense of trying to *control* it.

The rest of the work is without text, with the exception of two short excerpts from *Dante's Purgatorium* in the second part - the Latin hymn *Tē lucis ante terminum* and Dante's poem *Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona*.

HÅKON DANIEL NYSTEDT

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(PHOTO: ENDRE GJENDEM)



ØRJAN MATRE
(PHOTO: INGVL FESTERVOLL MELIEN)

Four Pieces

The *Four Pieces from a Distance* were composed in the spring of 2020 during the first part of the COVID-19 pandemic under the strict regulations of social distancing. In several sections of the piece, the musicians are asked to play completely without coordination with the other performers. Two of the songs are based on traditional hymns, 'O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus' and 'Children of the Heavenly Father'. The latter has been given the subtitle 'Andrà tutto bene', the Italian expression that children all over the world wrote on their rainbow drawings, with a desire and hope that in the end everything would turn out alright.



THE OSLO CHAMBER CHOIR
(PHOTO: ENDRE GJENDEM)

Håkon Daniel Nystedt received formal training in conducting from both the Norwegian Academy of Music and the Royal Danish Academy of Music. He has conducted most of the Norwegian and several other Scandinavian symphony orchestras, as well as numerous professional choirs, bands, and opera companies. He has received the Norwegian Radio Orchestra Prize (KORK-prisen), and in 2019, was awarded the Critics' Prize for the performance of a new opera by Gisle Kverndokk, alongside the rest of the ensemble.

Since 2021, he has been affiliated with the Oslo National Academy of the Arts and over a three-year period will be focusing on new

opera projects. His opera *Anima*, co-written with Peter Bäckström, was performed on the main stage of the Oslo National Academy of the Arts in the autumn of 2023 and will be staged again at the Halland Opera & Vocal Festival in 2024. His *Stabat Mater* was performed at the closing concert of the Oslo International Church Music Festival in 2023.

Cantor **Anders Eidsten Dahl** received a degree in church music at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, where he also gained a diploma in solo organ performance. After further studies in as a soloist at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory in Copenhagen, he performed debut concerts in both Copenhagen and Oslo.

Among his notable mentors are Professor Terje Winge, Oslo Cathedral's principal organist Kåre Nordstoga, and Swedish classical organist Professor Hans Fagius.

Eidsten Dahl regularly performs solo concerts and is actively engaged as a chamber musician. In addition to his work as a freelance concert organist, he serves as an associate professor of organ at the Norwegian Academy of Music, as well as cantor at Bragernes Church in Drammen. He has received critical acclaim for the several records he has released both as a soloist and chamber musician.

Percussionist **Hans-Kristian Kjos Sørensen** is internationally acclaimed for his

versatility and creativity. He has extensive experience across a variety of genres. This includes jazz collaborations with Misha Alperin, Bugge Wesseltoft, and Arve Henriksen. In the realm of musical theatre, he has worked with composers Georges Aperghis, Klaus Maria Brandauer, and Jean-Pierre Drouet. He has performed baroque music alongside violinist Daniel Hope and harpsichordist Kristian Bezuidenhout, and given classical performances with artists such as Tanja and Christian Tetzlaff, Martin Fröst, Sharon Kam, Ole Edvard Antonsen, Florian Donderer, and Lars Vogt.

Sørensen demonstrates a profound commitment to contemporary music, having premiered works by notable composers such as

Brett Dean, Per Nørgård, Rolf Wallin, Lars Petter Hagen, Svante Henryson, Johannes Harneit, Magne Hegdal, Åse Hedstrøm, Øyvind Mæland, Jon Øivind Ness, Henrik Hellstenius, and Håkon Nystedt. His repertoire also includes collaborations with Iannis Xenakis, Sofia Gubaidulina, George Crumb, Dave Maric, Vinko Globokar, Georges Aperghis, and John Adams.

Torgeir Koppang is a trained classical pianist from the Norwegian Academy of Music. He works both as a solo and chamber musician, and has accompanied several renowned singers and musicians such as Aage Kvalbein, Eli Kristin Hansveen, Ole Edvard Antonsen, Guri Egge, Njål Sparboe, Espen Langvik, Stephan Barrat-Due, Signe Sannem Lund, Emmanuel Bleuse, Helga Botn, Margrethe Fredheim, Didrik Solli-Tangen, Magne Fremmerlid and Frank Havrøy. He is often found playing with professional orchestras and military bands.

Koppang also has an active career in jazz, pop and improvised music, and plays with a number of artists such as Hilde Louise Asbjørnsen, Jannike Kruse, Laila Dalseth, Heidi Gjermundsen Broch, Heidi Ruud Ellingsen, Kåre Conradi, Majken Christiansen, Eli Stålhand, Maria Mohn, Jørn Hoel, Frikk Heide-Steen, Guri Schanke and Mari Maurstad. He is in demand as a conductor and arranger, and has appeared on a number of recordings.

Since his directorial debut in 1986, **Peter Bäckström** has worked as an opera director, dramaturge, playwright, educator, and theatre director in his homeland Sweden, as well as in Denmark, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy. He freelances as a director, dramaturge, playwright, and coach, and holds the position of senior associate

professor at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen.

Bäckström has authored numerous plays and librettos for operas that have been performed on various theatre and opera stages in Sweden, often directed by himself.

The Oslo Chamber Choir was founded in 1984 by Grete Pedersen, and since 2005 Håkon Daniel Nystedt has been its conductor and artistic director. In its initial stages the choir began experimenting with Norwegian folk music, and it is its folk music repertoire that has garnered the choir considerable international attention. The choir performed at Carnegie Hall, New York in June 2015 and in April 2017, and has embarked on several tours, in particular to the USA and Asia. The Oslo Chamber Choir has premiered works by a wide range of Norwegian composers, and regularly performs together with renowned artists from a variety of styles.

Silje Aker Johnsen is a soprano, dancer and performing artist. She has a PhD from the Norwegian National Academy of Opera as part of the Academy of Arts in Oslo, and has a highly active career as a soloist. In 2013, she was named “Performer of the Year” by the Norwegian Composers Association. Aker Johnsen is a member of Ensemble Neon, which won the *Spellemannspris* (Norwegian grammies) in the Contemporary Music category in 2016, and also took out the “Performer of the Year” prize from the Norwegian Composers’ Association in 2017.

Eir Vatn Strøm is a folk singer and composer with a number of releases to her name, both with the group *Ævestaden* and as a solo artist. She was named INTRO-folk’s young folk musician of the year in 2022.



NYNORSK MESSINGKVINTETT
(PHOTO: TERJE AASLAND)

By combining contemporary music with performing arts and literature, **NyNorsk Messingkvintett (brass quintet)** has created a repertoire with a thoroughly distinctive style. In collaboration with authors such as Kjartan Fløgstad and Knut Nærum, the performing arts group Fakta Morgana, lighting designer Evelina Dembacke, sound designer Thorolf Thuestad, as well as musicians such as Tora Augestad, Per Arne Glorvigen, Frank Havrøy, Silje Aker Johnsen and Trygve Seim, the ensemble has developed unique concert experiences aimed at audiences of all ages.

NyNorsk Messingkvintett has made a name for itself with its 44 first performances since 2016, and for its accomplishments in the Norwegian contemporary music scene it received Performer of the Year award in

2021 by the Norwegian Composers Association. They have played at festivals such as the Northern Lights Festival, Bergen Kirkeautunnale, Tonehimmel in Volda and Dei Nynorske Festsjela (an annual celebration of the New Norwegian culture). They have held masterclasses at higher music education institutions in Norway and the Baltics and organised workshops with young composers. The ensemble has released two critically acclaimed albums on LAWO Classics: *Hornflow-ers*, with music by Nils Henrik Asheim (2021) and *Mégolithes* with music by Gerard Grisey and Anders Tveit in 2023.

Håkon Daniel Nystedt (*1980)

Purgatorium

1. I. *Introduksjon* 04:46
2. II. *Amor, che ne la mente* 01:52
3. III. *Horatio, del 1* 03:13
4. III. *Horatio, del 2* 04:03
5. IV. *Post Horatio Intermezzo* 02:53
6. V. *City I* 03:25
7. VI. *City II* 02:51
8. VII. *Órganon* 03:59
9. VIII. *Sonett* 05:51
10. IX. *Saiwalō* 05:01
11. X. *Coda* 04:40

Ørjan Matre (*1979)

Four Pieces from a Distance

12. I. *Prelude / Sanctus* 07:59
13. II. *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus / Agnus Dei* 07:25
14. III. *Toccata / Chasma Magnum Firmatum* 03:22
15. IV. *Children of the Heavenly Father / Amen* 03:34

MUSICIANS:

Oslo Kammerkor, choir
Håkon Daniel Nystedt, conductor
NyNorsk Messingkvintett, brass quintet
Anders Eidsten Dahl, organ
Hans-Christian Kjos Sørensen, percussion
Torgeir Koppang, piano
Silje Aker Johnsen, soprano
Eir Vatn Strøm, soprano

Purgatorium

The work was written at the initiative of Håkon Daniel Nystedt, commissioned by the Oslo Chamber Choir with the support of the Norwegian Cultural Council.

Four Pieces from a Distance

is supported by The Norwegian Composers' Fund. The choral version is also supported by the Norwegian Society of Composers. It was commissioned by The Norwegian Organ Festival and NyNorsk Messingkvintett.

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